

I am writing to you today as a land owner in rural Wyoming who would like to add my voice of support to the pending merger of EchoStar and DIRECTV. The combination of these two satellite providers will provide numerous benefits to consumers like me, including more choices in channels, programming, broadband and new television technologies.

By merging, the combined company will be a much stronger competitor to cable television and can offer more programming choices and, most importantly, all local TV channels in every market in the U.S. By providing local TV channels everywhere, this merger will make living in a rural area similar to receiving cable in a urban community. Throughout the country, people will now be able to turn to satellite TV to access their local news, weather and community information, in addition to a comprehensive package of national video programming. But just as exciting, the merger will bring the availability of affordable high-speed Internet service by satellite to over 40 million Americans who don't have high-speed Internet access. These tremendous benefits to consumers won't happen without the merger. Satellite-delivered Internet service will bring an affordable and competitive alternative to cable modems and DSL to consumers in big cities, small towns and rural areas alike. This will give me a competitive choice for Internet access and will be especially advantageous to rural communities where cable modems and DSL are not likely to be available anytime in the near future.

I currently live in San Francisco but will over the course of the next few years be moving to Merna Wyoming. There is no cable service and no broadband internet service available. The merger of these companies will greatly enhance the offerings that we who own property or live in rural areas would have access to.

In the interest of improving our access to competitive television and Internet service, I urge you to lend your support to this merger.